

MALVINA,

*collated
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perfect.*

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TRAGEDY,

First Edition.

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M.DCC.LXXVI.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MORDRED, king of Leinster.

CALMAR, earl of Meath.

CONRAD, an old general in the service of Mordred.

UTHER, prince of Leinster.

RINVAL, favourite of Calmar.

WOMEN.

MALVINA, Calmar's daughter.

EUNA, Rinval's sister.

Messenger, Attendants, &c.

M A L V I N A;

ACT I. SCENE a Grove.]

† Enter MALVINA.

HERE let me wander on my custom'd banks
While May profusely flings her gather'd fragrance;
At noon enjoy the shade in yonder grove,
Or tired recline me in my fav'rite bowers.
Ah bowers to me how dear! and banks, and grove!
Here with my Rinval in our childish days
I careless cull'd the flowers of gairish spring,
Felt summer's suns, rich autumn's bounty tasted,
And saw keen winter's snows and crystal towers
In blest succession each revolving year.
'Twas here the lightning of my hero's eye
Resistless pierc'd me to the soul, and wak'd
The blush we fain would hide, the hopes and fears
That heave the lovesick maiden's gentle bosom.
—Yes, let me wander in these blest retreats!
Where I so oft my Rinval's manly sense

A

Admir'd, so oft indulg'd in tender gaze!

But why will mem'ry thus delighted dwell
On happy prospects that are gone for ever!—
Ah me! how vain all sublunary bliss:
So late as yesterday, devoid of care,
In fondest hope I spent the joyful day:
But, sad vicissitude! this morning's sun
Sees not a maid more hapless than Malvina.

Enter EUNA.

Eun. Say gentle Lady wherefore all in tears?
Is this a time to weep? can sorrow find
A corner in thy breast this happy morn:
That sets Malvina on the throne of Leinster?

Mal. Alas, my Euna, I am most unhappy!

Eun. And do the joys of reigning over Erin;
The splendid preparations of your marriage,
Wet with a tear Malvina's damask cheek?

Shake off sweet Lady these so mournful looks,
And thy deportment to our joys accord.

Mal. O just is thy surprise to find me thus
At such a time, unconscious of the cause:

But didst thou know, my Euna, why I weep!—

Urge not—it now were dangerous thou shouldst know.

Eun. And can Malvina hesitate to trust me?

Is then our friendship at an end? the ties
Of fond regard, that long together bound
Our virgin hearts with more than sister's love,
Destroy'd? Ah wherefore am I treated thus?

Mal. Allow me on thy sympathizing breast
To lean the while I pour my sorrow forth.

Eun. Unfold thy griefs, and let thy Euna's love
Or soothe thy beating heart, or share thy woe.

Mal. Mild comforter, from this my mis'ry learn, (shews his picture)
Look there, and cease to wonder why I grieve.

Eun. Rinval—my brother!

Mal. O exalted maid!

Proud may'st thou be to call young Rinval brother!—

Behold with rapture that majestic form,

That manly countenance, those radiant eyes

That speak the feeling heart, the noble soul!

And can my Euna blame my tears, who knows

I henceforth must forget my gen'rous hero!

Eun. Is Rinval then preferr'd to Leinster's prince?

My brother th' object of thy fond regard?

Mal. My love! my life! my heart's sole sov'reign he!—

O! dearest Euna, would he now were here,

My comely youth, in extacy I'd strain him

To my glad breast, and pour my soul in love!

Eun. Most fatal love! it must not be indulg'd.

Mal. With Rinval blest, I'd ev'ry hardship brave.

Eun. Should you your fire's authority contemn,

And irritate his temper, in exile

Unheeded must you dwell, and sadly waste

In lone obscurity your chearless days.

Mal. Exile!—O'er barren heaths I'd rather plod

With him I love, and by the roughest toil

Subsistence earn, despising summer's suns,

And winter's howling blast; than with proud Uther

Lead my life on downy couches to repose

Mid all the envied grandeur of a court.

Eun. These fond reflections but disturb thy peace,

Thou know'st thy sire on Leinster's prince has fix'd,

A match so flatt'ring could not but prevail.

Mal. Alas! what are the pleasures of a crown,

What all the pomp, and pageantry of power

When purchas'd at so dear a rate! to me

Death's more desirable than Uther's hand.

Eun. My bosom heaves the sympathetic sigh;

For well I know the mildness of thy nature

Can ill oppose a father's stern resolve.

Mal. Thou wilt in friendship chide me when I own

That ev'ry slight occurrence feeds my woe.

As pensively I climb'd yon distant hill;
At early dawn, to soothe my heavy heart;
I saw in groupes blithe swains and shepherd maids]
With glee disporting in the flow'ry vale:
The while in rural dance they brush'd the dew
I sadly lean'd contrasting our conditions,
And envied them their blest tho' humble state.

Eun. How more than happy could my brother be
Possess'd of fair Malvina—but how vain,
Ah me how foolish that romantic thought!

Mal. Dost thou not therefore pity me sweet maid?

Ah whither flown ye hours of tranquil joy,
Blest hours that smil'd propitious on our loves!

Euna indulge me in the dear reflection;
For still fond mem'ry paints in warmest tints
My Love's embarrassment, and modest blush

When first in ill articulated phrase

His passion he reveal'd, which long ere then

His sighs, his partial preference betray'd.

Yes mem'ry dwells with pleasure on that eve!

How fondly then my comely boy I view'd,

Trac'd all the charms youths ripen'd bloom

Had o'er his glowing visage shed, and sigh'd!—

Eun. I wonder not Malvina, who but knows,

The genuine joy that soothes the virgin's heart
When the lov'd youth his soft emotion owns.

Mal. Ah now how chang'd the scene! my gallant Rinval
Must thy Malvina think of thee no more!

Quit thine for Uther's arms, distracting thought!—
Sooner shall daggers pierce this bursting heart
Than it should heave a tender sigh for Uther.

And shall I then provoke my father's rage;
Incur the hatred of so good a fire!
Ah can I think of driving to despair
So tender, so affectionate a parent?

Eun. Thy tears all eloquent may yet prevail
And change thy father's thoughts.

Mal. I once was happy
In such a hope, but henceforth must despair.—

How will my faithful hero grieve to hear
Our golden prospects of approaching bliss
Are changed to dismal scenes of endless woe.

Eun. But see, fair Lady, from the upland lawn
With hasty step young Rinval hither speeds.

Mal. 'Tis he! all comforts bless thee for the news!
Thy kind intelligence delights me Euna.
How throbs my bosom at his wish'd approach;
My sorrows vanish as I fondly view him.—

Ah me! thou know'st not half thy brother's worth:
 Join'd to the virtues of his honest soul,
 Such are the charms of his persuasive converse,
 That, in his presence, ev'ry care's forgot,
 And love, and innocent delight prevail.

Enter RINVAL.

Rin. O guide my steps to that enchanting glade
 From whence these sounds seraphic steal away,
 And all mellifluous meet my enraptur'd ear.
 Come, my Malvina, pride of womankind!
 Thus let me fold thee to my elated heart, &

Mal. Thrice welcome to my bosom; gallant youth,
 There thou alone reign'st sovereign of my soul!
 Forgive the fondness of this artless breast;
 My honest heart disdains the mean deceit
 Which cautious virgins practice on mankind
 To hide the wish their fears forbid to own:
 Convinced of thy sincerity and love,
 I proudly boast how much I dote on Rinval.

Rin. 'Tis bliss supreme, in rapture thus to hear
 Thy tender voice that fondly cheers my soul,
 And gaze with transport on thy eyes blue lustre!

Mal. Wou'd that these beauties you so much admire
 Had power to charm no other breast but thine!

Then from my cares, and dread suspense reliev'd,
I'd waste with thee my future happy days.—

Rin. And cou'dst thou then, all beauteous as thou art,
Reject a throne to make thy Rival blest!

Mal. These tender foldings speak my love sincere!
But thou, 'twould seem, hast heard my fatal doom.

Rin. Ev'n now your sire and Leinster's ancient general
Confer regarding thy approaching nuptials:

And lo they come!

Mal. Defend us heav'n! 'tis Uther.

Rin. Love brace my nerves, and guide my weapon home;
On my proud rival let me wreck my vengeance!

Mal. Oppose him not, my Rival, as thou lov'st me;
Should'st thou resistance shew, we're lost for ever.

Rin. Shall haughty Uther in my very sight
Bear off in triumph such transcendant beauty!
Shall I with dastard heart—forbid it heaven!

Patient behold thee from my presence borne,
Nor to thy rescue fly? I then, sweet maid,
Shou'd deem myself unworthy thy regard.

Mal. Be calm fond youth, suppress thine ardent passion:
Let not thy rashness our faint gleam of hope
Destroy: believe me, Uther sues in vain.—

I'll with my tears bedew my father's feet:

My sighs unfeign'd may win his tender heart,

While, lowly bent, I plead the cause of love."

Rin. Endearing faint! thy soothing words are balm
To my disorder'd soul.

Mal. We'll still be happy!

Put up thy sword, and instantly retire,
We must not thus be seen—O be advis'd!

And, as thou lov'st my peace, consult thy safety,
For on thy fate depends Malvina's life.

Rin. While thou art kind I must be ever happy. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter CONRAD and Uther.

Con. My Lord I give you joy, and from my soul
I wish you happy in this change of life
You have so long, and eager wish'd; a change,
'Tis now resolv'd, will speedily take place.

Uth. Blest be the tongue that friendly thus salutes,
With such a greeting, my transported ear:
Welcome! thrice welcome, O my faithful Conrad!
For thy congratulations are sincere.

Con. In truth it was not difficult, brave Uther,
'T' anticipate the issue of this business:
Calmar's ambition never would refuse
A match so correspondent to his wishes.

Uth. Prithee no more—O cease these keen reflections;
I know what thou dost point at, but alas

'Tis now too late to hint the dire result
 Of my impetuous passion—for, although
 By this alliance strengthened, brave earl Calmar
 Ambitiously were to usurp the throne
 Of Leinster, and maintain his seat; nay though
 My dearest friends were all in dungeon pent,
 My Country lost, and were it in my power,
 By giving up my love, my blest Malvina,
 To redeem them all—Gods! ev'n so circumstanc'd,
 I cou'd not part with her my soul holds dear!

Con. Mistake me not, my Lord; by what I urg'd
 I mean not, trust me, to insinuate
 That Meath's good earl would ever fly to arms
 'Gainst Leinster's sovereign when so near allied;
 Or strive to raise himself upon the ruin
 Of his only child—No, on the contrary
 He dotes upon her, with such fondness dotes,
 His power, his riches, nay his very life,
 The welfare of his daughter to promote
 He'd cheerfully lay down. He will have reach'd
 The summit of his highest wish, my Lord,
 Were she so happily in marriage join'd.
Uth. Conrad dispise me not, should I, at times,
 Expose my weakness to my bosom friend,

Con. But wherefore term it weakness good my Lord?

A virtuous love to glory stimulates,
With courage firm, and noble emulation

The hero it inspires, and urges on

T' atchievements worthy of immortal fame.

Uth. Thou know'st not, General, my inglorious state;

That beautiful maid possesses all my soul!—

Now disregarded may our waving banners

Display their hues, and sport with ev'ry breeze:

The trumps shrill clangor, and the battles roar

That wont to rouse my heart, and make it leap

As if it scorn'd its bourne, keep to attack

The enemy; no more have power to move.—

Into such wild extravagances oft

With thoughts of her I'm driven, as make me blush

When calm reflection brings them to my view.

Con. You have no cause, young prince, to be ashamed;

Our greatest heroes have, in ev'ry age,

Been subject to love's powerful sway: did not

The godlike Hercules love his Omphale?

Uth. Yes, and demean'd himself for her most vilely.—

O Conrad, my prophetic fears of falling,

For blest Malvina, into such disgrace,

Make my fond soul recoil, and all the hero

Leave me. For with such tenderness I love,
I could, to wander with her, basely flee
My station in the field, and turn my back,
Like dastard cowards, on my country's foes.

Con. That man, my Lord, whose adamant heart
Th'endearing pleasures of blest love ne'er knew,
Ought ever to be shunn'd, he's more than savage,
For other's sorrow cannot feel, nor taste
The genuine comforts of society.

Uth. O my Malvina, best of womankind!
Thy virtues have made conquest of a youth
Whom force of arms could never yet subdue.

Con. Banish these thoughts that agitate thy soul;
Away, fond youth, embrace this happy hour
Which bids so fair to crown thy highest wishes:
Heav'n smiles propitious on thy flame, earl Calmar,
Ev'n now, impatient waits to greet thee welcome,
Let us begone.

Uth. Thou need'st not, Conrad, thus
Rebuke my stay, did'st thou but know how fondly
M' impatient soul longs for th' exalted Fair!
Be still my heart.—Thou wonder of thy sex!
I fly in rapture to thy wish'd embrace.

[*Exeunt*,

End of the first Act,

ACT. II. SCENE, a Grove.

Enter MALVINA and EUNA.

Eun. Hah still dejected, weeps Malvina still?

Is ev'ry hope then buried in despair,
That sadly thus in pining grief absorb'd,
Like melancholy in her dreary cell,
Thou sigh'st in solitude the live-long day?

Mal. O that some lone, some far sequester'd cave,
Deep in the bosom of umbrageous wilds,
Would poor Malvina in its covert hide.

There undisturb'd with folly's motely crowds;
From man secluded since denied my Rival,
Of ev'ry future day through wretched life
I might desponding weep the sun to rest,
And swell Aurora's dew-drops with my tears!

Eun. These sighs distress me; let not wasting grief
Prey on thy beauties, and depress thy soul:
Be comforted, and make thy Euna happy.

Mal. Talk not of comfort, I was born to grieve,
Was born in endless mis'ry to bewail!
May never virgin feel distress like mine!—
Beware, my Euna, O beware of love;

Encourage not the fond bewitching flame
Till friends approve, and parents give consent;
Or of thy tender heart 'twill take such hold,
Such lasting hold, as death alone can loose.

Eun. 'Twas friendly spoke: but let us to the hall,
Where social intercourse, and music's charms
Will raise thy spirits, and divert thy sorrow.

Mal. These dear retreats best suit my state of mind.
Ye much lov'd scenes, our haunts in happier days!
Here, partial to your beauties, must I wander,
For still I feel the gales that from you blow
Afford my drooping soul a gleam of joy.

Eun. Indulge not thus your unavailing cares,
For sake these bowers, they're now to thee the haunts
Of melancholy, and the nurse of woe.—

Mal. Perhaps thou know'st not, Euna, that ev'n here,
Keen for the field, (that memorable day
When he so gallantly my father sav'd;
Rinval, all in his burnish'd armour clad,
Elated press'd me to his joyful bosom;
And cried, " Suppress these swelling sighs Malvina,
" Why starts the tear in thy love-beaming eyes?
" 'Tis in a glorious cause we tempt the field;
" We bare our weapons to protect our country;

"What else cou'd force me from thy kind embrace.

"I'll strew my laurels at Malvina's feet:

"Be gay, be happy in thy Rinval's absence:

"Thy fond endearments, when again we meet,

"Shall well compensate the fatigues of war."

O how my beating heart approv'd his brav'ry
While the big tear stood trembling in my eye!

Eun. Wou'd that thy Euna's friendship cou'd speak peace,
For I sincerely feel for thee Malvina!

Mal. These were the golden days of blest delight!
Then bloom'd our banks and bowers with sweeter
verdure,

O'er eastern hills more joyful rose the morn,
And nature with superior lustre smiled!

Eun. Ah do not agitate thy tender frame,
Nor longer ruminate on pleasures past.

Mal. Yes, pleasures past, that never will return!
The time has been when we were more than happy,
When heaven propitious on our passion smiled,
And blest our innocently wanton hours!
But never more, alas! the thought distracts me,
Such happiness we'll never more enjoy!

Eun. Could not thy sighs sincere, thy tender plaint,
Thy tears, that melt my soul, prevail with Calmar?

Mal. O had'st thou seen me prostrate at his feet,
 Conjuring him by all the fond regard
 He ever shew'd, and as he priz'd my peace,
 To break off this concerted match with Uther.
 'Tis true my tears, at first, to move him seem'd,
 And, for a while, he, with relenting ear,
 Attentive listen'd to my tender tale.
 But soon his wild ambition brought to mind
 What mighty honours would from thence proceed,
 And banish'd all the feelings of a father
 From his relentless bosom!

Eun. Curst ambition!

What scenes of horror on thy rage await.
 Through fields of carnage you relentless drive,
 Nor shrieks of virgins from their mothers torn,
 Nor widows wailing for their murder'd lords
 Can move to pity thy obdurate heart!

Mal. The fatal truth I prove most keenly, Euna;
 And to encrease my pain, see Uther comes:
 Let us retire—I will not hear him now,
 Thy arm, sweet Euna, lead me to my bower. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Uther and Conrad.

Uth. By heav'n, she shuns me!—is it come to this—
 Shall Uther bear, with patience, such affronts?

Shall Leinster's prince, born, bravely to seize honour
In battle's front, ignobly yield a slave
To female humour! O my foolish heart!

Con. And art thou, then, so little skill'd in th' arts
Of cunning woman; can a frowning look
Thus disconcert your purpose? boldly urge:
What lady can refuse a proffer'd throne?
But, opportunely, see, earl Calmar comes.

Enter CALMAR.

Cal. Health to the mighty Uther, and his friend,
And blest be this auspicious day that gives
Malvina's hand to Leinster's warlike prince!

Uth. Earl Calmar, from my heart I wish thee happy.
I know thy innate goodness greets me well;
And would to heav'n Malvina's gentle breast
As kindly welcom'd her unhappy Uther!

Cal. Unhappy! say what sorrow damps thy soul?
What maid but glories in a youth like thee!
Let mirth and pleasure crown the genial hours,
And bless this day that makes our int'rests one!

Uth. O that Malvina knew what boundless joy,
The kind requital of my matchless love,
O'er happy Meath and Leinster would diffuse!

Cal. And does Malvina scorn thy proffer'd love?

Uth. Earl Calmar, ~~hadst~~ thou seen, when flush'd with hope,
I flew, exulting, to her wish'd embrace,
Expecting joy reciprocal would warm
Her gentle breast, and sparkle in her eyes,
How suddenly my throbbing bosom froze
On finding her dejected, bath'd in tears,
And pouring on the gale her tender plaint.

Cal. Bred up in camps, and long inur'd to danger,
Thy valiant heart can be but little skill'd
In love's soft tales, and womens artful guiles.

Uth. Deep in the covert of the leafy glade,
In all her winning softness was she wand'ring,
When my glad eye beheld her heav'nly form:
The while, in extacy I view'd her charms,
And felt their power; how could I bear to see
Her swelling bosom heave the sigh of sorrow,

Cal. 'Twas but the coznage of the sex, no more.

Uth. No, good my lord, she frankly own'd the cause;
For while I gently press'd her to my breast,
Say what disturbs thy peace, I fondly cried,
Why mourns Malvina, wherefore all in tears?
O speak the cause all beauteous as thou art.
" Uther, she said, if genuine be thy friendship,

" Urge thy vain suit no farther—bless some maid
 " Whose mutual flame will crown your happy union:
 " My truant heart, in truth, can never love thee.—
 " You have my Sire's consent, but think what honour,
 " What lasting fame would grace the godlike act;
 " Should you, in friendship, generously promote
 " The happiness of her you wish so well."

Cal. Her seeming coyness is a proof she loves thee.

Uth. I have not found it so: ev'n now I wish'd
 A happy interview, but ere I reach'd
 Her fav'rite grove, the maid perceiv'd and shunn'd me'

Cal. Be not dishearten'd for she shall be thine.
 Let's to the hall, and drain the spicy bowl:
 In thy behalf I'll use my utmost skill,
 Determin'd or with mildness to persuade,
 Or sternly to compel her to obey.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter RINVAL.

Death to my hopes! my rival thus in favour.
 Unhappy Rinal! must I now for ever
 Despair of all the paradisiac bliss,
 Of all the golden prospects of delight,
 Possess'd of her, I hop'd to have enjoy'd!
 Gods shall I tamely view her, best of women,
 Thus torn from mine to fill another's arms!

Away, the basest coward e'er disgrac'd
 The foldier's name, in such a state as this,
 Would laugh at danger to obtain his love.—
 'Tis true the earl has ever been most kind:
 But, to his will, in this, I cannot yield,
 To me the world's a barren wild without her.

Enter CALMAR.

Cal. Well, my brave youth, thus far good fortune smiles;
 I've left the fair Malvina with prince Uther
 In tender conference. To day she weds him.—
 Why thus dejected? does not Rival joy
 In young Malvina's happiness and mine?

Rin. My Lord, the num'rous marks of bounteous friend-
 And tender instances of fond regard (ship,
 You've from my infancy been pleas'd to shew,
 Have ever made m' esteem you as a father,
 And, as a sister, love the blest Malvina.

Cal. And do not her approaching nuptials then,
 Her prospect of a crown delight thee much?

Rin. Ah me! how groundless the romantic thought,
 That wealth, and power can happiness procure!
 And how chimerical th' ambitious views
 Of weak mankind, whose flattering hopes present
 Ideal states in life, which, could they reach,

They vainly judge their joy would be compleat :
With riches crown'd, the poor man would be blest,
The miser, happy, were he richer still.

Cal. And whither will these wav'ring fancies lead?
Thy scatter'd thoughts call home; dispel the cloud
That, louring, shades thy melancholy brow:
Your wonted chearfulness resume, and mirth,
And give this festive day to social joy.

Rin. In marriage, good my lord, our future bliss,
Or misery depend upon our choice:
We ne'er can be too circumspect, too wary,
In first adjusting this important point.

Cal. Have I not seriously the matter weigh'd?

Rin. You know what character prince Uther bears,
Your gentle daughter, from her soul, detests him:
And wouldst thou, lured by vain ambitious hopes,
To Uther's arms consign your ages darling
To waste, in woe, her miserable days!

Cal. Of Leinster's prince you judge, by far, too harshly.

Rin. I know, my lord, this freedom you condemn.

But you'll forgive me, as you are convinc'd

Your lovely daughter's welfare is my care.—

Cal. No more, good Rival; something has displeas'd thee.
These looks suit not the humour of the time;

Fail not, anon, to meet me at the castle;
 This happy day we shall devote to pleasure. [Exit.

RINVAL solus.

Is then our doom irrevocably seal'd!
 Forbid it heav'n, nor plunge us in despair!—
 In me the earl has ever put his trust;
 Yet here I'll scruple not to risk his wrath,
 And ruin all his mad ambitious hopes;
 For Calmar's views are cruel in th' extreme;
 He, stifling all the feelings of a parent,
 Wou'd, for a throne, destroy his daughter's peace!—
 Eternal Justice, shall I suffer this!
 O never—me she with her heart has blest,
 To me looks for protection, and shall find it!
 Ere Uther weds her he must conquer me.—
 But lo! she comes, my hopes again revive!

Enter MALVINA.

Ye cherub choir, behold your bright resemblance!
 View her in all the elegance of woe!—
 On that fine form I could forever gaze,
 And trace, delighted, all her peerless beauties!
 —These sighs, Malvina, wound me to the soul!
Mal. Not less benevolent thou art, than brave!
 Hence heaves thy breast, and streams that honest tear.

Rin. The drop insensibly starts in my eye,
And ev'ry feature thus accords with thine!
What mortal, that beholds thee weep, but sheds
A tear with thee, and all thy sorrow feels!

Mal. Ye Powers! how could I hang upon these lips,
And rapt in extacy forget my woes!

Rin. And may I still, then, rest assur'd, Malvin,
That vaunting Uther never shall prevail?

Mal. Thou art, alone, the fav'rite of my soul!
On thee I'd chearfully bestow my youth;
With thee rejoice, while bounteous fortune smil'd,
Or soothe thee mid the harsh vicissitudes
Of life.

Rin. Mild seraph! wilt thou still speak peace,
Still with these honied accents comfort bring!

Mal. O Rinval Rinval! what a life of joy,
Ador'd by thee, I fondly hop'd to lead;
How proud should I have been to call thee husband!
But, now within the sacred walls immur'd
Of some lone convent, with our God I'll spend
My future pious hours.

Rin. Ah talk not thus!
Of convents, I conjure thee, talk no more!
Let's take our flight to Munster's gracious king:

The good old chief admir'd thy infant charms;
You've ever his peculiar fav'rite been,
He will protect us with a parent's care,
And arm his forces to defend our cause.

Mal. My valiant hero, 'tis not Leinster's power
Thou hast alone to fear; my raging Sire,
With all his num'rous host will seek thy ruin:
Thou think'st not of the fatal consequence!

Rin. Let cowards ponder in their dastard minds
What risks they have to run; fair excellence!
I think of nothing but obtaining thee.

Mal. And I, O Rinval, should not hesitate
To bear the censures of an envious world,
And trust me to thy care: but cruel foes
Will furious rush, and tear thee from my hold,
And I, alas! shall never see thee more!

Rin. I've been more provident than thou'rt aware.
In yonder woody dell conceal'd, awaits
A chosen legion of courageous friends,
Who have espous'd our cause, and will defend us.

Mal. And art thou then, resolv'd, thou gallant youth,
To risk thy precious life in such a scheme,
To brave such danger for Malvina's sake?

Rin. Sweet innocence! to be possess'd of thee

I'll rush through millions of opposing foes!

But, O despise me not, I grow a boaster.

This is the season meet, ah! do not lose it.

Prince Uther and the earl, in social mirth,

Beguile the hours, and quaff the mantling juice.

Delib'rate not, let's instantly begone.

Mal. Look down in mercy, ye immortal powers!

Calm the emotion of my troubled breast:

Forgive, if contrary to filial duty,

I act as my resistless passion prompts.—

Yes I must follow thee, lead on my Rival. [*Exeunt.*

End of the second act.

ACT, III, SCENE, a Parterre near
Mordred's palace.

Enter MORDRED and CONRAD.

Mor. Married to Rival! 'sdeath we brook not this.—
Know'st thou what cause contributed to change
So suddenly, the earl's unsteady mind?

Con. My liege, I beg your patience for a moment:
Hear all I know concerning this affair.

Owen, that noble, that renown'd old chief!
(My heart still warms in praising real worth,)
Left to his trusty friend, the earl of Meath,
The care and education of his children.
Beneath one roof, hence Rival and Malvina,
In infant dalliance pass'd their tender years;
Congenial were their souls, then wonder not
The prattling fondness of their childish days,
As they advanc'd, should ripen into love,
From all their passion they, with care, conceal'd,
Till Uther to the maid preferr'd his suit,
And th' earl, so keenly, urg'd the flatt'ring match,
Mor. And did the knowledge of their mutual love

O'erturn, at once, th' ambitious Calmar's schemes?

Con. That too, my royal liege, I can unfold,

As, yesterday we chac'd the goblet round,

Tidings arriv'd that Rinval had entic'd

The fair Malvina to forsake her bower.

On th' instant Calmar mounted and pursu'd,

And brave prince Uther and myself rode with him:

We soon o'ertook them—keen th' inveterate youths

In single combat strove; till Meath's good earl,

Rushing between, prevented farther strife;

And with the valour of young Rinval mov'd,

And melted with his daughter's sighs and tears,

Who grasp'd his knees, to these resolv'd to grow

Till pardon should be seal'd; was forc'd to turn

And heave the sigh he proudly try'd to check.

Ambition, now, with all his tempting lurements,

Was not so powerful as parental love,

With many a kind embrace he rais'd Malvina,

And, while the glad tear glisten'd in his eye,

Here take her Rinval, cried he, and be blest!

Mor. How did the injur'd prince such treatment bear?

Con. So violent was his passion, sov'reign liege,

His agitation may be well conceiv'd;

I long, in vain, endeavour'd to appease him;

His furious ire was to persuasion deaf;
On all the powers of Meath he vow'd revenge.

Mor. Old Calmar's conduct has incurr'd our hate:
And yet we wish not that our private quarrel
Should call Ierne's warriors to the field.

If thou can'st soothe prince Uther's violent rage,
We shall resent it, Conrad, as becomes

Our dignity,—but Uther this way speeds;

We leave thee to advise th' impetuous youth,

And counsel him as prudence shall direct. *Exit.*

CONRAD solus.

I greatly fear this proud indignant boy

Will, in revenge of old earl Calmar's conduct,

Regardless of th' event, stir up a war,

Which with the loss of many a chief, may soon

Reduce this land of liberty to thralldom:

For many times of late, the sons of Albion

Have strove, in vain, to reach our guarded shores:

They may avail them of our civil discord,

And gain at last, perhaps, a fatal landing.

Enter Uther.

Uth. Why dost thou loiter here? without delay,

Prepare my vet'ran forces for the field,

Gird on your sword, in arms we sleep to night.

M A L V I N A.

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Con. This happy island, freedom's blest abode,
Has long been crown'd with liberty's best gifts!
Proud of their rights, her bold intrepid heroes,
With godlike firmness ever have maintain'd
Their independence, and repell'd their foes;
And, pity it were, Ierne's freeborn sons,
To madness driven with vindictive rage,
Should lose that freedom they've so long enjoy'd.

Uth. Curse on thy volubility of tongue!
This insult offer'd we must straight revenge.

Con. My boldness, Uther, let my years excuse;
The freedoms of a soldier, grown infirm
In his lov'd country's service, pardon claim,
Let reason guide, and mark what I advise.

Uth. Garrulous old fool! and what would'st thou advise?
Art thou afraid to hazard in the field
That wrinkled front? thy frozen heart should warm
At thoughts of war, where thou might'st crown, once
more,

These silver hairs of thine with glorious laurels.

Con. No, valiant prince, impute it not to fear:
'Tis true my years might well excuse my absence
From busy war, but, thanks to heav'n, I've strength
To wield a sword, and am as prompt as ever

To die or conquer in my country's cause.

Uth. Prepare for battle then, and give us proof

You're worthy of the fame conferr'd on you;

Talk not so calmly in a case like this.

Con. Your love for Calmar's daughter, while a maid,

I much approv'd; urg'd you to woo, and win her;

But now she's married, think of her no more.

Thou know'st the horrors of our bloody feuds:

Yet would'st thou, to indulge a lawless love,

Ruin the peace of all this happy isle.

The guilty passion of the Phrygian youth

For beauteous Helen, laid old Tróy in ashes:

The charms of Ægypt's fair voluptuous queen

Disgrac'd and lost Mark Anthony the world.

Think of the consequences noble prince,

To reason list, and moderate thy rage.

Uth. Confusion wait thee! moderate my rage!—

Robb'd of my love, my all, my fair Malvina,

Wilt thou thus grate my ear, and talk of reason!

Would to the gods! I had the favour'd youth

That has destroy'd my peace, and wanton revels

In those delights I fondly hop'd to taste!

His heart elate I'd from his bosom tear,

And leave him with'ring in the northern blast.

—No more of reason—meditate revenge! [Exit.]

CONRAD solus.

'Tis as I fear'd!—O'er this devoted land
Soon will the famish'd raven hover, keen
To riot in our butcher'd kindred's blood!—
Go, inconsiderate regardless boy!
Thou little know'st the danger of thy rashness. [Exit.]

SCENE, a Grove.

Enter MALVINA and EUNA at opposite sides
of the stage.

Eun. Behold the beauteous bride in seemly guise,
With modest blushes warm'd, like fair Aurora
Reddening with the dawn of morn, approaches!
Descend blest Hymen! kindle here thy torch;
To latest years may't unextinguish'd blaze!
Ye guardian angels hover round their couch;
With sweetest flowers their downy pillow strew;
And O! may heav'n reward their virtuous love
With a succession of endearing offspring!
Mal. Blest be your wishes as they are unfeign'd!

Come, faithful Euna, come my friend sincere,
You shar'd my woe, participate my joy!

Ah now, sweet Euna, what a happy change!
A faint resemblance of my boundless pleasure,
On reaching land the shipwreck'd sailor feels,
Who, long the sport of wild impetuous winds,
In shatter'd bark, had o'er the deep been toss'd.
He views, secure, the towering billows foam,
Nor further dreads the howling tempest's fury.
So with my lord establish'd is my bliss!
Nor doubts, nor fears have, longer, power to damp
Th' extatic transport of my enraptur'd soul!

Eun. My dearest sister (by that happy name
I may salute thee now) it gives me joy
To see the lilly and the rose-bud blow,
Delightful blended on thy cheek once more;
To see thy eyes their magic fire resume,
And all thy wonted gaiety return.

Mal. For this to heav'n with grateful heart I bow!

Eun. O! little did'st thou think, when wrung with care
You wept the chearless, evening sun to rest,
Your rising would be joyful as his own!

Mal. Uncertain are the changes of our fate,
Which, wisely, God from mortal ken with-holds!

O never, ye, of happiness despair,
Whose godlike hearts delight in virtuous acts.
Though dire misfortunes in a train succeed,
Though sickness long your languid souls depress,
And deepest sorrows wring your bursting hearts;
Still persevere, your happiness awaits,
Eternal comfort shall reward your virtue !

But lo! my husband hither bends his way:
My dearest Euna hie thee to the hall,
See ev'ry thing prepar'd, let mirth abound, [Exit
With sweetest music greet my Rinval welcome. Euna.

Enter RINVAL.

With what impatience thy return I wish'd!
Say what detain'd my loving lord till now?
O! ev'ry weary moment seem'd an age
In absence of my hero!

Rin. Wonder not;

Unenvied can such beauty be enjoyed!—

Dire disappointment with envenom'd tooth

Incessant gnaws at Uther's tortur'd breast—

His merciless fury will have vent.

Mal. Ah Rinval!

Rin. Why sigh? against his malice we're prepar'd:

Treating with Munster's king prolong'd my stay;

His powerful legions, when requir'd will aid
Our several armies, and protect our rights. *

Mal. Thou talk'st of battles with elated soul!
Thou wilt not sure, my love, provoke thy fate
Amid the horrors of a bloody war!

Rin. A heart that beats not in so just a cause,
My gentle Lady, were of thee unworthy.
The gallant Calmar is renown'd in war,
His glory ever with his years increas'd:
His great example I'm resolv'd to follow,
And emulate his mighty deeds in arms.

Mal. Ah me my Rinval, would that peace prevail'd!
Th' immortal Powers have blest our happy union;
Yet my prophetic soul, good heav'n forgive me!
Forbodes some cruel fate awaits us still.

Rin. Success awaits us; Munster is our friend.
Chear up Malvina: our distracting fears
Lets banish all, and hence to mirth devote
Our happy days, our nights to virtuous love.

Mal. I'll under thy protection rest secure,
With soul to heav'n's most gracious will resign'd!

Rin. Gods can there be on earth such winning grace,
Untainted purity, and boundless joy!—
Great are thy blessings, fond connubial love!

Thy social comforts smoothe the brow of care,
Make our misfortunes easy to be borne,
And sweeten life with more than earthly pleasure!

Enter CALMAR.

Cal. Joy to your loves, and many a happy day!
Far from your peaceful bower be discord banish'd,
With all his hated train, and ev'ry care
That mar the blessings of domestic comfort!—
My soul rejoices in the pleasing thought,
That smoothe the ev'ning of my days will pass,
And, mid your pledges of connubial love,
I'll waste my age, and calmly breath my last.

Mal. With gratitude thy daughter's heart o'erflows;
Thy goodness has my pining grief dispell'd,
And bless'd my arms with all my soul holds dear!

Cal. No action of my life, my sweet Malvina,
E'er gave thy happy father half the joy!
Pleas'd with the blest event I see, unmov'd,
The storm of battle gathering o'er our heads;
And where's the danger when young Rinval's near?
I've proof of thy undaunted soul, and skill
In arms, whose gallant bravery sav'd my life.

Rin. My lord our cause is good, we lead our troops
Against the fury of a lawless tyrant.

Munster with generous zeal supports our right,
And arms his forces in the cause of justice.—

Malvina why that sigh? with such an host
We'll hurl destruction on the boaster's head.

Mal. Hard was his heart, and cruel his ambition,
Who first with deadly weapon brav'd the field,
And courted spoil amid the battle's roar.

What dread calamities have thence ensued!
Thence vengeful in their ire, contending Powers,
Regardless of soft pity's voice, and strangers
To the dear pleasures of domestic quiet,
Imbrue their ruthless hands in kindred's blood,
And thin mankind to swell their proud domain!

Cal. But think, Malvina, what endearing joys,
When from the field victorious we return,
Will crown your meeting!—I remember well,
Thy loving mother (whom I long had left
To brave the force of Albion's bold invaders)
When from our shore discomfited they sail'd,
In fondest transport strain'd me to her breast!
Rapt in the tender agonies of love,
I soon forgot my toil and danger past!
My pleasure too thy little arts enhanc'd;
With joy I found thee clinging to my knees,

Employing all thy innocent endearments
To draw attention, and to share my favour.
Then didst thou gaze upon my polish'd helm,
And, pleas'd at heart, admire the purple plume;
Then strove, in vain, to poise the taper lance,
And rear the buckler on thy feeble arm.
You're now, Malvina, with a hero blest,
Whose vigorous strength can well sustain their weight,
And manly courage wield them 'gainst the foe.

Flourish of trumpets.

Rin. These sounds announce th' approach of Munster's
Cal. 'Tis he! heav'n blefs him with his choicest gifts! (king
He comes to grace thy bridal feast Malvina.

O how I long to fold him to my bosom! [*Exit Cal.*

Rin. Come, thou in whom forever I delight!

Our friends await to crown this festive day
With sweetest minstrelsy and bridal songs;

Resume thy gaiety and chear our guests,

Thy winning smiles will glad the social hour.

Mal. My cares for thee, when absent, damp my soul.

But fear me not, I'll give them hearty welcome;

While thou art near I never can be fad. [*Exeunt.*

End of the third Act.

ACT IV. SCENE Mordred's camp.

Enter Conrad.

THE pleasures of this temperate eve delight me!—
 How mild the air, and sweet the balmy gale
 Which zephyrs fling from their ambrosial wings.
 Yet mid the beauties of so mild a scene,
 A sigh of genuine pity swells the heart,
 While, pondering on the battle, I reflect
 That yon bright sun, which, to the western wave
 Speeds down the sky, now gilds the glittering arms
 Of many a chief who ne'er again shall taste
 The genial influence of his parting ray!

Enter MORDRED and attendants.

Hail sovereign Liege!

Mor. Health to the noble Conrad!

Awaits prince Uther as he was desir'd?

Con. The youthful warrior with impatience waits,
 And to divert the time till your arrival,
 Rides through his ranks encouraging his soldiers
 With manly, and persuasive eloquence.

Mor. 'Tis well—brave Conrad let me now intreat,
In this campaign you'll shew your steady courage,
And skill in glorious war.—Our wonted honour,
Which this affront has sullied, let's retrieve,
And still give laws to Erin's happy isle.

Con. Erewhile I thought that calmly I might waste,
Like Roman heroes, in some blest retirement,
The few remaining years of fleeting life
Which fate may have ordain'd me; but infirm,
And old as I may seem, my royal liege,
My heart still beats with highest indignation
Against my sovereign's foes; I still can wear
The shield, and make them tremble at my lance.

Mor. We know thy valour, happy is the king
Who has such leaders to defend his cause.

Enter Uther.

Prince Uther welcome!—we've with pleasure heard
Thy chosen bands are eager for the charge:
Heav'n seems to smile propitious on our purpose.

Uth. It glads my heart to see the hope of conquest
So strongly mark'd in ev'ry soldier's look.

Con. I've been revolving in my mind, brave prince,
From lasting peace what numerous blessings flow;
Here, from the horrid din of war reliev'd,

Fair Science fix'd her residence; here, arts
To full perfection rose; and wide o'er all
Our cultivated fields rich harvest pour'd
His golden stores profuse.

Nor. What means our general?
Thou talk'st as if averse to fight. Shall we
To whom kind heav'n has granted sov'reign power
O'er blest Ierne's isle, brook such affronts?

He that would thus advise is not our friend.

Con. No, mighty sovereign, your resolves are just,
Such high indignities for vengeance call.

Uth. Why then, unseasonably, would'st thou strive,
With specious eulogies on idle peace,
To damp our ardour in a cause like this!

Con. With good heav'n's justice mixing adverse fortune,
Enhances oft our happiness below.

Thus, the great Ruler of events, is pleas'd
To mar the blessings we so long enjoy'd,
Beneath the sceptre of celestial Peace,
With all the horrors of a civil war;

That, when the battle's dreadful conflict's o'er,
The goddess with redoubled charms may shine,
And be by ev'ry happy subject woo'd.

Uth. For heav'n's sake done, I can no longer bear!

Patience herself, loquacious fool, would tire,
Condemn'd to hear thy everlasting talk.

Now to your tent, dread Sire, indulge repose,
And leave me with our friends and fellow-soldiers,
To adjust th' important business of to-morrow.

Mor. We leave thee prince, and thank thy kind concern.—

Give proof, the courage of your brave forefathers
Still warms the bosoms of their warlike sons. *Exit.*

Uth. Ye valiant warriors, countrymen, and friends,
Who have so oft, invincible in arms!

Subdued your foes in war's ensanguin'd field,
And greatly merited immortal fame;

Know, your illustrious deeds call for exertion,
In this approaching battle, to maintain

Your wonted glory, and fresh laurels win.

Our watchful guards with skill are posted round,
And keenly our impatient legions wish
The swift arrival of to-morrow's dawn.

The night advances, to your tents retire,
And taste a short invigorating sleep;

Then full of spirit with the morning rise,
And speed, elated, to your sev'ral stations;

Strain ev'ry sinew 'gainst th' insulting foe,

Urge them with fury, seize their waving standard,
And dash their towering helmets to the earth!

Farewell—sound all the instruments of war,
And may the god of battles give success. [*A flourish.*

Exeunt Con. &c.

UTHER solus.

Now big with hope I view yon range of tents,
The busy ardour of th' impatient troops,
And all the bustle of determin'd war.
The dread confusion suits my purpose well.

—I've learn'd that Rival and the earl of Meath
Sleep in the camp to night. Be still my heart!

'Tis as I wish, my project cannot fail.

I'll storm ere day break their ill guarded towers,

And fly to England with the dear Malvina!

The shades of night begin to close around;

This golden opportunity I'll seize,

While smiling fortune fires my eager soul! [*Exit.*

SCENE, An apartment in Calmar's castle.

Enter RINVAL, MALVINA, and EUNA.

Rin. Yes, we're prepar'd to brave their keenest fury!

In camp we sleep to night, by break of day

Resolv'd to give the vaunting Uther battle.

Mal. Ah! must my Rival brave the battle's rage!

Thy valiant soul despises ev'ry danger:

Their num'rous legions, Uther's merciless hate,

All to confirm my hoding fears unite!

Rin. Nay, rather fancy to thyself thou feest

Our keen intrepid forces dauntless rushing

Through their disorder'd ranks, and like a torrent

Sweeping before them all our routed foes.

Fancy thou feest me from the conquer'd field

Triumphant marching to my love's embrace!

Mal. Fain would I flatter me with such fond hopes!

A flourish.

Rin. But hark! the trumpet calls me to the camp;

Calmar impatient wonders at my stay.—

Within these wall girt towers in safety lodge

With sister Euna;—when the field is won,

Expect us home—then joy shall fill the hall,
And love's endearing smiles reward the brave!

Mal. O thou unkind one, wilt thou, wilt thou leave me?

Thou shalt not—thus I'll fold thee to my bosom:

My soul's chief hope! my Rival will not go!

Riv. By all our loves, Malvina, I conjure thee

Strive not our resolutions thus to thwart,

And melt, with such affecting sighs, my soul!

In this great crisis there's no time for love.

O turn away thy all subduing eyes,

My heart is so susceptible of love,

'Twill yield, thou know'st, to ev'ry tender look!

Again I'm call'd! *[A flourish.]*

Mal. With thee I cannot part!

Riv. I must, reluctant, tear myself away:—

Farewel—may all good Angels guard you both! *[Exit.]*

Mal. Rival!—defend my husband gracious heav'n!

O fatal fends! full many a weeping mother,

Ere night again shall spread her dusky veil,

Will bend, desponding, o'er her lifeless son!

Full many a widow rend her streaming hair,

And bathe her husbands mangled corse with tears!

Belike myself, distracting thought! my hero,

My brave, my gallant Rival mocks at danger!

Eun. Why, dearest sister, wilt thou thus give scope
To fancied fears, and wring thy tender breast
By dwelling on the worst that can befall.

Mal. You justly blame me, but my anxious mind
Perversely ruminates, kind heav'n forgive me,
On all the ills that may befall my sire,
And guardian of my life, m^r intrepid husband!

Eun. Soon will thy father clinging to thy breast,
With all a parent's fondness check these sighs:
Soon will these tears that tremble in thy eye,
Be by thy hero's kisses clear'd away,
And in his kind embrace your care forgot.

Mal. Just heav'n will bless thee for thy friendly comfort!
But should my lord, my life, my Rival die
In this unhappy difference! ev'n the fate
Of poor Andromache, whose tale I've heard
With tears, was not so hard as mine will be.—
She had her young Astynax to rear,
Whose infant smile might mitigate her woe;
And oft she might amuse herself, and trace,
While fondly gazing on her darling child,
The well remember'd features of her lord.—
But woe is me! should I my hero lose,
No infant Rival will my sorrows soothe;

My widow'd hours will never comfort know!

Eun. Trust in the mercy of th' immortal Powers!

And rest assur'd, Malvina, that the brave

Are ever the peculiar care of heav'n!

Mal. O Euna, I applaud his noble spirit,

But, do not chide me, can a wife suppress

Her boding fears of losing such a husband?—

O God omnipotent! by all ador'd, [kneels]

In mercy tender, as in power supreme:

Forgive the fears I've impiously indulg'd;

Amid the battle's rage protect my fire,

And save my gallant husband's precious life!—

My dearest sister let us court repose;

I'll ever thank thee for thy friendly care. [Exeunt.]

SCENE. A Forest.

Enter Uther.

'Tis now the dead, and awful hour of midnight;

From yonder blue-ethereal vault, the moon,

Chaste orb! already in her mid career,

Sheds the pale lustre of her silver light.—

Mute is the busy world's late noise and tumult,
 And not a sound is heard, save of the breeze
 That gently rustles through the leafy glades;
 Or screaming owl that, sometimes, flitting by,
 Calls drowsy echo from her rocky cave,
 And adds new horrors to the dreary scene.—
 The doting Calmar, and vain glorious Rinval,
 Keen for the battle in their tents repose.—
 If this design succeeds!—how can it fail?
 Our num'rous forces will at once engage;
 Old Calmar's castle is but weakly guarded,
 And flurrying Rinval dreams not of the danger.

Enter MESSENGER.

Joy seems to smile propitious in thy looks;
 Say, has our scheme succeeded to our wishes?
Mess. My lord, all's well—the sentinels are slain,
 Thy chosen band awaits thee at the castle;
 Thy mariners are ready to unmoor,
 And happily the wind blows fair for England.
Uth. Ye ruling Powers, for this be ever prais'd!
 I'm fortunate beyond my fondest hopes!—
 Swift will I speed me to the destin'd towers,
 Compleat my wish, and triumph in my turn—
 Now shall the wonder of her sex be mine! — [Exit.]

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SCENE, An Apartment in Calmar's castle.

MALVINA and EUNA.

Mal. Wide over all a solemn stillness reigns.
To bed sweet maid, and leave me to indulge
In fond reflection while my Euna sleeps.

Eun. Till thou'rt dispos'd to rest I cannot leave thee.

Mal. But I too long have trespass'd on thy goodness:
Retire I pr'ythee to thy couch; thy health
Requires you shun the midnight sickly damps,
And prove the balmy comforts of repose.

Eun. I cannot think of sleep while thou'rt awake.

Mal. Intruding thoughts too busy for my peace,
Foes to restoring sleep, possess my soul.

To part so soon, unfortunate!—O Euna

What golden prospects of elysian bliss

Had fancy drawn! With fortunes richest gifts

Crown'd to our wishes, I already saw

Our wide domain with fresher verdure bloom,

Our painted halls more elegantly shine;

And converse that improves, and friends sincere,

True joy, and sweet society prevail.

Eun. And still enjoy the golden dream, Malvina.

Let others prove how sharp the thorn's keen point
That lurks beneath the blushing rose; be thine
To taste its gather'd fragrance as it blows.

A noise without.

Mal. Guard us ye Powers! what can that tumult mean?
I hear the clank of steel! our tower's beset;
What shall we do!—no kind protection's near!

UTHER without.

On my brave foldiers, quick, surround the gates;
Destroy these doors that guard my cruel Fair.

Mal. We are undone!—'tis savage Uther's voice!
Haste, haste, my Euna, let us to the turret,
And try to mitigate their brutal rage,
With mild deportment, and with soothing speech.

Eun. Nay, pr'ythee tarry here and rest secure,
I'll strive alone to deprecate their fury. [Exit.

Mal. Where now, O Rinval, are thy chosen bands;
While, by fierce ruffians at this awful hour,
Thy helpless wife and sister are attack'd!

UTHER without.

On th' instant, madam, ope your massive doors,
Or by yon heav'n! I'll tear them from their hinge,
And raze your lofty turrets to the ground.—

EUNA from the turret.

Uther hear me!—for love of heav'n desist!
Stain not thy glory by a coward's rudeness.

UTHER without.

'Tis idle talking: rive these bolts of iron
That rudely bar a lover from his mistress.—

Mal. Ah, Euna,—whither has my Euna gone!
Horror he comes! have mercy gracious heav'n!

Enter UTHUR and followers.

Uth. Now, fair Malvina, 'tis in vain to struggle.

Mal. O prince, thou, erewhile partial to Malvina;
Wert wont my maiden vanity to flatter;
And tho' my rebel heart unkindly answer'd
Thy blandishments, and doted on another,
I rested happy in the pleasing hope
That gallant Uther still would be my friend.

Uth. How captivating that seraphic voice!—
I could with pleasure for a while defer
My enterprize to hear her tender pleading.

Mal. He muses—generous Uther will relent!

Uth. Ah my Malvina! what a life of bliss!
Thy Uther fondly hop'd with thee to lead,
When I had plac'd thee on the throne of Leinster!
But we may still be blest—Do thou be kind—

Mal. Thou knowst, brave youth, I never can be thine,
Ah! wherefore wouldst thou rend two gentle hearts!

Uth. Ask, rather, wherefore glows that vermil lip,
Why beams the liquid lightning from thy eyes,
And heave the thousand beauties of thy bosom.

Mal. Urge not, good Uther, what must be denied;
Far distant is my lord.

Uth. Perdition seize him!

Mal. O fully not thy glory, nor abuse
His weak unguarded lady in his absence.

Uth. I'll not expostulate, revenge!

Mal. Sweet prince,
Rage not so furiously—desist for pity!

Uth. Let me be brief, these tears will else unman me.
Bear hence th' enchanting Siren—haste, away.

Mal. Rival, where art thou now! ah, where my hus-
band!

For mercy, Uther, spare a helpless wife!

Then kill me coward, stab me to the heart!

[They bear her off.]

End of the fourth Act.

ACT V. SCENE, Field of battle.

Noise of war and soldiers driven across the stage.

Enter RINVAL and CONRAD fighting.

CONRAD falls.

Con. O Rinval thou hast nobly fought—Thy cause
Was good; thou did'st not wantonly provoke
Thy fate in battle, as thy foes have done.
Detested Uther!—Thou much injur'd youth!
While yet I've strength to speak, mark how we've
wrong'd thee;

And grant forgiveness to a poor old man
Who, ready to expire, takes heav'n to witness
That his soul shudder'd at the horrid deed.

Rin. Dost thou, whom civil discord made my foe;
Ev'n thou, O Conrad, whom this arm has slain,
Thus pity so sincerely my misfortunes?
Thou good old hero! say, what mighty wrongs
My merciless foes, have in my absence done me?

Con. At dead of night, while in your tent you slept;

Your castle we beset: inglorious act!
And sighs and tears despising, and unmov'd
By piercing shrieks, unfeeling as we were!
Seiz'd the fair Euna and thy lovely wife.

Rin. Disgrace to valour—two defenceless women!

Con. 'Twas purpos'd to have carried them to England:

But Albion's chieftains ever on the watch,
Had, mid our bustling, landed unperceiv'd:
And ere we reach'd the shore, a warlike band,
(Ev'n those whom Uther vainly deem'd his friends,)
Mov'd by the screaming of the beauteous captives,
Rush'd to their rescue with resistless force:

And while we combated, swift thro' the wood
The trembling pair, with fear distracted, fled.

Rin. Guide the poor wand'rers, ye immortal Powers!

Con. Thus Henry has avail'd him of our troubles.

We cannot boast our independence long!

O welcome death! I shall not see the ills

That wait this late blest residence of freedom!

I faint apace—farewel! forgive me Rival! [Dies.

Rin. Brave man! immortal is thy well earn'd fame!—

Unhappy that I am!—at dead of night!

My ever gentle! in a ruffian's power!

The torturing thought will drive me to despair!

But wherefore thus deliberate? revenge!
 Through thickest ranks of our opposing foes
 Impetuous let me rush, with Uther combat,
 And wreck my fury on the coward's head. [Exit

SCENE. A Forest.

Enter MALVINA and EUNA.

Eun. Dearest Malvina, I can go no farther:
 The welling wound I, last night, deem'd so slight,
 Hath drain'd the vital stream—my limbs, unable
 To travel longer now beneath me sink.

Mal. I'll yet support thee; still, ah still bear up!
 A few more steps may bring us to some cot
 Adown the vale, beneath whose humble roof
 Kind hospitality and pity dwell.

Eun. 'Tis now too late, Malvina; here I'll lean me
 And yield, resign'd, my fleeting soul to heav'n!

Mal. Alas! is there no help—what shall I do!—
 O! if thy strength is not yet quite exhausted,
 Let's slowly move; some sympathizing hind
 May hear our cry, and succour thy distress.

Eun. How happy am I, best of woman kind!

Who have so sweet a comforter and friend
To soothe my pains, and close my eyes in death.

Mal. Talk not of death, kind heav'n will send relief!

Lean on my arm; we yet may reach our home;
Enjoy the converse of our dearest friends,
And waste our future days in ease and pleasure.

Eun. Yes, generous fair, thou wilt be ever blest!

Th' immortal powers have stores of endless pleasure,
Laid up for hearts benevolent like thine.

But O! I now must leave thee best Malvina:

My strength has fail'd me, and my spirits sink;
Urge me no farther, I must lean me here. *She falls to the*

Mal. Support thee all good angels! O for pity; ground.
Is there no help, no kind assistance near!

Eun. Uncertain is the term of fleeting life.

A thousand ills impending o'er our heads

May, mid our revelling, strike the final blow!

In that dread hour, how vain the charms of beauty,

The pomp of power, the pageantry of kings,

And all the pleasures of a giddy world!

'Tis thou alone, bright virtue, heav'n-born maid!

Can soothe our anguish in the hour of death!

Mal. Ah how delusive are our flatt'ring hopes!

Methought all might be well again—when freed

From our inveterate foes, we reach'd, unseen,
These solitary wilds.

Eun. It gives me comfort,
My dearest sister, in my dying moments,
To think, when all my sorrows, all my pains
Are o'er, that of thy safety still there's hope:
And since I'll moulder in my native soil;
What, tho' within this drear sequester'd wild,
No gloomy funeral pomp, behind my bier,
Slowly advancing fills the darken'd path;
Nor tomb magnificent o'erlooks my grave;
My head will rest upon this lap of earth,
Embower'd with fable cypress trees, as easy
As in the fretted sepulchre of kings.

Mal. O do not, Euna, do not yet despair!
To yonder moss-grown bank, beneath the oak,
If yet thy feeble limbs have strength to move,
I'll bear thee hence; there, more at ease recline,
While I for succour range the neighbouring vales.

Eun. How tenderly dost thou consult my ease!
Kind heav'n thy goodness amply will reward.

[Leads her out.]

SCENE. Field of battle.

Enter Uther.

The English chief has heard their moving tale!
 Fair wonder of thy sex! what heart but Uther's
 Will not thy sighs, thy streaming tears subdue!
 Henry will henceforth rule this conquer'd isle,
 And endless infamy will blast my name!
 Thy matchless charms, Malvina, have undone me!
 For thee what crimes have I not perpetrated!
 Expos'd my royal father to his foes
 By whom o'erpower'd he nobly fell—while I
 From England courted aid, and lost my Country!

Enter MESSENGER.

How now—whence art thou? say, what news?
Mess. My lord
 Our troubles are no more. The brave earl Calmar
 With all his troops, hath yielded to the English.
 Unhappy Rinval ere this change took place,
 In the last bold effort for the victory,
 Was carried off transfix'd with mortal wounds.

Uth. Young Rinval wounded! there new hopes arise.
Long, like the troubled main, by veering gusts
For ever ruffled, has my restless mind
Of each impetuous passion been the sport;
And still, Malvina, thy resistless beauties,
Bear sov'reign sway possessing all my soul.

But tell me—how was old earl Calmar treated?

Mess. My lord, restor'd to all his former honours:
And when Malvina's story was made known,
The English general thought his daughter injur'd,
And, angry, vow'd her wrongs should be redress'd.

Uth. No more—begone and leave me—thought Malvina
Injur'd, and vow'd her wrongs should be redress'd!—

Well, be it so—my father lives not now—

My crimes will wring his honest heart no more!—

I've been successful in my country's ruin!

Nor will I stop, now desperation prompts,

Till I've possess'd me of the glorious prize,

Or in the attempt shall meet with welcome death. *Exit.*

SCENE. A Forest.

MALVINA.

Sweet Melancholy! come, and guide my way
To thy sequester'd cave; where from the glades,
And dales, and woods around, thy mournful tale
Fond Echo still in mimic strain returns.
With thee I'll sit retir'd: thy pensive haunts,
To genuine grief like mine, are most congenial.
Why starts this tear! my Euna now is happy:
Rid of a world of woe she sleeps in peace!—
This lonely forest shall, to pity, hence
Be sacred: here the virtuous shall retire,
Weep o'er this humble turf, and, sighing, own
Kind sympathy lies buried here with Euna!
The widow and the orphan here shall mourn
Her death, on finding none to pity, none
To feel for them, and grant relief like her!—
In prime of beauty was she summon'd hence;
Pleas'd with her virtues Heav'n soon put an end
To all her griefs, and call'd her to himself!—

But soft, what noise is that! ha, what a sight!
 Distain'd with blood—alas! some hapless youth
 Led wounded from the fatal field of war!
 Belike, some doting mother's only son;
 Or some unhappy lady's much lov'd lord!
 My bosom bleeds with sorrow for his sake!
 O Euna, how wouldst thou have sooth'd his pain.
 Farewel! I'll go and imitate thy virtues. [Exit.

Enter RINVAL mortally wounded, supported by his attendants.

Atten. This way, my lord, soon brings us to the village.

Rin. No farther, I will lean me here my friends:
 In vain with this officious care you strive,
 All gen'rous as ye are! t' assuage my pains;
 My wounds are mortal, all your aid is fruitless.

In what lone desert weeps my poor Malvina!
 Inexorable fiend! could not her sighs,
 Her tears all eloquent, her piercing shrieks
 Prevail, and soften thy hard heart to pity!
 Let me forget it, 'twill distract me else!

Enter MALVINA.

Mal. Unhappy youth! what wayward fate has cropt
 The blooming glory of thy growing virtues!

Almighty God! my husband—pale and bleeding!

O let me strain thee to my bursting heart,
And soothe thy pains, and bathe thy wounds in tears!

Rin. Behold, Malvina, still thy hapless Rinval
Retains as much of ebbing life, as lifts
His eyes to take their last fond look of thee!

Mal. O fly ye kind attendants of my lord,
Fly to the village, some assistance bring! *Exeunt Attend.*

Yet, yet thou may'st recover, yet may live
To dry these tears, and make me ever happy!

Rin. Malvina there's no hope, my wounds are mortal.

Mal. Forbid it heav'n! Ah shall I lose thee Rinval!

Rin. 'Mid all my woes I thank just providence
For blessing me with one more sight of thee:

And yet, alas! I fear my dying pangs,
Kind as thou art, will rend thy gentle bosom!

Mal. Was it for this, ye powers divine, we met!

Rin. Look not so tenderly my best Malvina!

Mal. What stores of future happiness, O Rinval!

I vainly hop'd awaited us, what joy

Did I not promise me, when we should meet,

To thee recounting my escape with Euna

Our gentle sister who is now no more!

Rin. My sister dead! O Euna thou art happy!—

Thanks to kind destiny for freeing thee
 From Uther's perfidy.—It glads my heart
 That thou'rt at liberty, tho' heav'n forbids
 I should be blest with my Malvina long!—
 Give me thy hand!—the vital stream flows fast.

Mal. O God of mercy! must we part for ever!

Rin. My eye-lids close apace, I can no longer
 Gaze on thy lovely form—O welcome death
 'Twas in my hapless country's cause I fell!—

Farewel Malvina—ever be thou blest!

[dies.]

Mal. My lord! my Rinval! [She faints.]

Enter Uther.

Uth. 'Twas the voice of woe!
 And not unpleasing to the ears of Uther—
 Soft! was it lov'd Malvina's voice I heard?
 It was—there lies the darling of her soul,
 A lifeless corse, drench'd with her streaming tears!—
 Again she breathes, again her heav'nly eyes
 Beam comfort forth, and cheer my longing heart!
 Her husband's slain, and I may yet succeed!—
 This is the season meet.—Thou best of women!
 Might now thy Uther hope!

Mal. What place is this
 Forlorn and desolate? What awful glooms

Hang brooding o'er this region of despair!

Must I still wander in the dreary waste!

Will nothing break my heart?

Uth. How wild she raves!

Malvina, wilt thou not in pity look,

On him that loves, that to distraction loves thee?

Mal. Avaunt! avaunt! whence, and what art thou
monster?

Ha, ruthless murd'rer! wilt thou haunt me still?

What, not satiated, not glutted yet with blood?

Will't not suffice that thou hast kill'd my husband!

My brave, my gallant lord?—inhuman fiend,

Must I be tortur'd with thy baneful presence?

Cold lies my hero on th' empurpled earth,

Mangled with many a wound! distressful sight!—

O Rival! could my heat to life restore thee!

Uth. Hear me my fair.

Mal. Thou kindest, best of men!

Uth. Nay, then, the good earl Calmar, now in prison,

This very hour shall die.

Mal. Alas! my father

Thy prisoner! ah then his doom is fix'd!

Uth. 'Tis in thy power to save him if thou wilt.

Resolve to listen to my passion, madam,

Or now prepare to see thy father die.

Mal. Long have I wander'd in this vale of tears,
 Ever, 'twixt hope and fear, in dread suspense;
 But this must end them—wherefore longer tarry?
 Despondence waits!—my Sire in dungeon thrown;
 Lifeless th' intrepid youth I lov'd so dear;
 And ev'ry hope of earthly comfort fled!—
 It shall be so.—Forgive me gracious heav'n!
 Thus—thus I gratify thy gorgon eyes [Stabs herself.
 With such a sight as they delight to view.

Uth. Infernal deed! why did I thus delay?
 Now horror closes round, and fell remorse
 Embitters life, and stings my guilty soul!
 Curse on my coward conscience.

Mal. Monster go,
 Associate with barbarians fierce, and cruel,
 With savages inhuman as thyself!—
 What spirit whispers in the dreary gloom?
 'Tis he! my husband! 'tis my murder'd lord!
 He frowns upon me, and with justice chides,
 For holding converse with the bloody Uther!
 But see he beckons me!—we're friends again!
 Yes I will follow thee! I come! I come!
 Now my lov'd Rinval! now thou art my own!

Together in the peaceful grave we'll rest

Till call'd to regions of eternal joy!

[dies.

Uth. And shall I live to infamy condemn'd?

That thought wounds deeper than a thousand daggers!—

Behold the fair destroyer of my peace!

How my soul shudders at the mighty ruin!

Eternal justice must detest my crimes;

That bloody fight ev'n moves the heart of Uther!—

Almighty Ruler who delight'st in virtue,

Shew thy abhorrence of my accursed deeds!

Their blood for vengeance calls; here hurl thy bolts;

Make me th' example of thy heav'nly justice!—

But O! I rave—how can I hope such mercy!

To end my days would be a kindness in thee,

For here I prove the horrors of despair!

[Exit.

THE END.

M. A. L. V. I. N. A.

I'er here I prove the horrors of despair!
To end my days would be a kindness in these,
But O I rave—how can I hope such mercy!
Make me the example of thy heavenly justice!—
Then blood for vengeance calls; here hush thy pains
Show thy abundance of my accursed deeds!
Almighty Ruler who delight'st in virtue,
That bloody fight ev'n moves the heart of Uffius—
Eternal justice must damn my crimes;
How my soul shudders at the mighty trial!
Behold the sin destroyer of my people!
I' that thought wounds deeper than mortal steel—
And shall I live to infamy condemn'd?
I'll call'd to regions of eternal joy!
Together in the peaceful graves we'll rest.